

## **A few tips for preparing for COVID-19 in a trauma informed way:**

1. Don't ignore what's happening, because your children - especially those with histories of trauma - will pick up on the fact that things are unexpectedly different in their worlds. Be calm and clear in any explanations.
2. A good message is to talk about the virus and how "we're working together to keep more people from getting sick by reducing some activities...and people are working to help one another out!"
3. Focus on what WILL stay the same...little things, that you'll still get up and eat breakfast, you'll still have lunch, you'll still sleep in your bed, etc. Give a nice long list.
4. If you sense a child is becoming anxious about it, call it out casually: "I noticed you might be a bit anxious about something...I'm wondering if it has anything to do with XYZ?"
5. Provide visual structure for your children. Make a visual plan for the day, introduce it in the morning, and work your way through it during the day. This is containing for the child. It will take extra effort on your part but will help them to manage their anxiety.
6. Outdoor play, baths, sensory play, etc. will be helpful activities. Walks, beach and forest trips or nature trails are suggested.
7. Remember that unexpected change, loss of routine and structure, and increased stress in the world will be HUGE triggers for many of your kids. Focus on co-regulation, keep expectations appropriate.
8. Be kind and considerate when you can. Not just practical tasks but understanding that in unpredictable times of change we can all feel anxious too.

Advice from Childline for children and young people:

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/anxiety-stress-panic/worries-about-the-world/>